



Meditation and Wellness

The Origins

What is meditation?

Many cultures use meditation as a way to balance the mind, stay positive, and in doing so, develop compassion. So many cultures and religions use meditative components like closing their eyes, saying prayers, using **prayer beads**, reciting quotes or **mantras** and practicing breathing to take away stress! Religions such as Buddhism use various forms of meditation as part of their religious practice. It is where the word “**Zen**” comes from! In Hinduism, meditation includes opening of the **chakras**, doing **yoga**, chanting mantras such as ‘**Aum**” and using **malas**. Meditation is also important in Sikhism while chanting the **Mool Mantra**. Folks use many forms of meditation in a variety of ways! Some go for walks or exercise, and some use artistic forms such as dancing or even painting to create art. In other words, meditation has been adapted in many ways! What comes to mind when you think of inner peace?

Asian Heritage- Meditation Roots

Chakras, mantras
& yoga - Hinduism



Nirvāṇa- liberation

Zen meditation -
Buddhism



Mool Mantra - Sikhism



Vocabulary

Chakra: Chakra (Sanskrit) means “wheel” and refers to energy points in your body. They are thought to be spinning disks of energy that should stay “open” and aligned, as they correspond to bundles of nerves, major organs, and areas of our energetic body that affect our emotional and physical well-being.

Zen: The term Zen is derived from the Japanese pronunciation of the Middle Chinese word (*chán*), an abbreviation of (*chánà*), which is a Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit word *dhyāna* ("meditation"). Zen emphasizes rigorous self-restraint, meditation-practice, insight into the nature of mind and nature of things, and the personal expression of this insight in daily life, especially for the benefit of others.

Yoga: Yoga is a group of physical, mental, and spiritual practices or disciplines which originated in ancient India. Yoga is one of the six orthodox philosophical schools of Hinduism. The word 'Yoga' is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Yuj', meaning 'to join' or 'to yoke' or 'to unite'. As per Yogic scriptures the practice of Yoga leads to the union of individual consciousness with that of the Universal Consciousness, indicating a perfect harmony between the mind and body, Man & Nature.

Mantra: Originally in Hinduism and Buddhism, a word or sound repeated to aid concentration in meditation.

Aum: Om is a sacred sound, a spiritual icon and a mantra in religions such as Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism.

Mool Mantra: The Mūl Mantar is the opening verse of the Sikh scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib. It consists of twelve words in the Punjabi language, written in Gurmukhi script, and are the most widely known among the Sikhs.

Malas: The term 'mala' is a Sanskrit word for “meditation garland.” Originally, mala beads were used for a special style of meditation called Japa, which means, “to recite.”

Prayer Beads: Prayer beads are used by members of various religious traditions such as Hinduism; Buddhism; Shintoism; Umbanda; some Christian faiths, such as Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Episcopalianism; Islam; Sikhism; and the Bahá'í Faith to mark the repetitions of prayers, chants or devotions, such as the rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Catholicism, dhikr (remembrance of God) in Islam and jaap in Hinduism.

Indigenous Knowledge



Turtle Island' is the name for the lands now known as North and Central America. It is a name used by some Indigenous peoples who believe their land was formed on the back of a **turtle**.

All aspects of life are **interconnected**, are not considered in isolation but as a part of the whole. .

Indigenous knowledge does not dictate how to control nature but how to live in harmony with the gifts of the Creator.

The world is believed to be an integral whole. Indigenous knowledge incorporates all aspects of life - spirituality, history, cultural practices, social interactions, language, healing.

There is a morality in Indigenous knowledge - a right and wrong way to interact with nature; there is a **responsibility** given from the Creator to respect the natural world.

Nature is sacred and must be protected.

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Humankind has not woven the web of life.

We are but one thread within it.

Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.

All things are bound together.

All things connect.

Chief Seattle [4]

“

The elders were wise. They knew that man's heart, away from nature, becomes hard; they knew that lack of respect for growing, living things, soon led to lack of respect for humans, too.

CHIEF LUTHER STANDING BEAR
SICANGU AND OGLALA LAKOTA CHIEF

I wonder if much that
ails our society stems
from the fact that we
have allowed ourselves to
be cut off from that love
of, and from, the land.
It is medicine for broken
land and empty hearts.

—Robin Wall Kimmerer,
Braiding Sweetgrass:
Indigenous Wisdom,
Scientific Knowledge, and
the Teachings of Plants

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"I LIKE TO IMAGINE THAT WHEN
skywoman

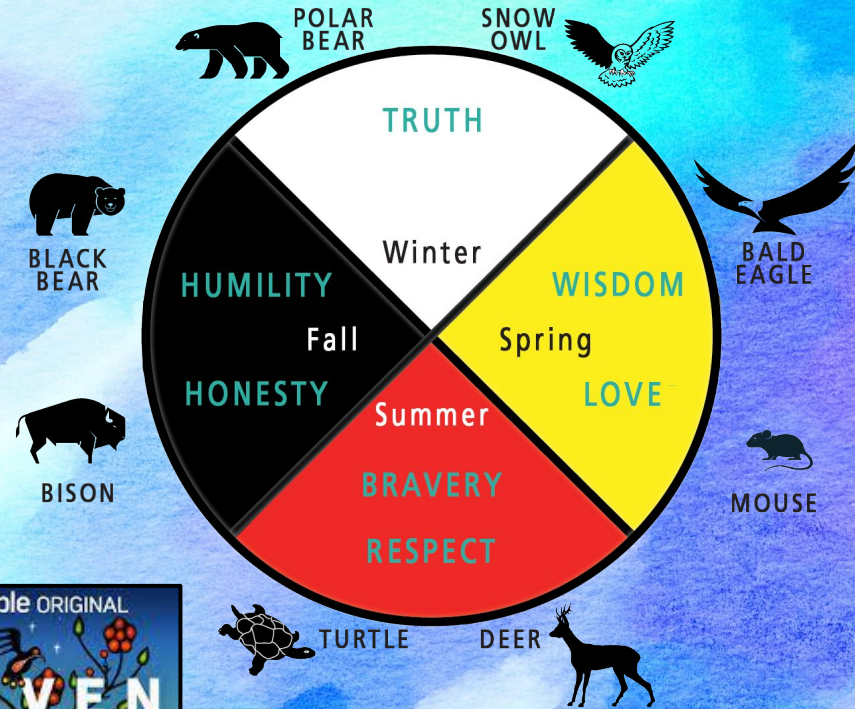
SCATTERED HER HANDFUL
OF SEEDS ACROSS TURTLE
ISLAND, SHE WAS SOWING
SUSTENANCE FOR THE BODY
AND ALSO FOR THE MIND,
EMOTION, AND SPIRIT: SHE
WAS LEAVING US TEACHERS.
THE PLANTS CAN TELL US

her story;
WE NEED TO LEARN TO
listen."

7 Grandfather Teachings/Medicine Wheel

- The Medicine Wheel represents all of creation, harmony and connections. It is considered a major symbol of peaceful interaction on Earth (All races of people, the directions, all of the cycles of nature, day and night, seasons, moons, life cycles, and orbits of the moon and planets).
- All Medicine Wheels are tools for people to learn about their place in the universe and their relationship to all things created.

Tanya Talaga: [7 Sacred Teachings](#)
[Spotlight on 7 Truths](#)



Anishinaabe -7 Grandfather Teachings

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- The **Anishinaabe** are a group of culturally related Indigenous **peoples** resident in what are now called Canada and the United States.
- Includes the historical Confederacy of Three Fires.
- The Three Fires Confederacy:
 - Ojibwe
 - Odawa
 - Pottawatomi.
- Ojibwe are the faithkeepers
- Odawa are the protectors
- The Pottawatomi are the keepers of the fire.

